

Information for New Members

Rehearsals

Savoyards' rehearsals nights are Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 7.30pm to 10pm at Shurdington Primary School, Badgeworth Lane, Badgeworth, GL51 4UQ; a fair number of members usually go to the pub for a drink after rehearsals, and new members really are welcome to join us there.

Each production publishes the start dates for music and floor rehearsals, starting with a number of pre-audition rehearsals before the principal and chorus auditions take place. If for any reason you have to miss (or be late) to any rehearsal, it is expected that you contact the director or production secretary as far in advance as possible; in fairness to the rest of the cast, missing rehearsals should only happen occasionally.

Concerts have fewer rehearsals, but don't be put off if everyone else knows the music and you don't feel confident with it yet - this is how most of us learnt it in the first place. Concert rehearsals are usually held on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and in recent years they have taken place during December and/or January, with the concert(s) taking place at the end of January or early February.

Tea or coffee and biscuits are served at rehearsals, by Jean Hawkins, for the nominal price of 50p.

Technical and dress rehearsals are usually held on the Sunday before the production opens, for Monday to Saturday shows, and there are usually two orchestra rehearsals too, which will be arranged individually for each production. Attendance at these rehearsals is absolutely compulsory for all cast members.

Membership Subscription

The annual subscription to the Society is £30 per member (£15 for junior members under 18) and £15 for non-performing members. In addition, there is a show fee of £20 for each show you participate in.

[Click here for a membership application form.](#)

Who's Who

The Society is run by an executive committee, elected annually at the AGM, which tends to represent both the more experienced and the younger members of the society. In addition, there is a concerts committee, which organises our concerts.

Newsletters

We circulate our newsletter, 'Precious Nonsense', 4 times a year.

Contacting us

The Savoyards' contact list lists all members' addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses; this information is, of course, confidential to members. Corrections and additions are published in the newsletters. The contact list is also listed in the members' section of the web-site, including the officers of the executive committee, who have 'official' e-mail addresses, such as secretary. The password for the members' pages will be given to you when you join to society.

The Cotswold Savoyards – present

The Savoyards put on two fully-staged productions each year, at the Everyman, Cheltenham's fully professional theatre, in early June, and at the Playhouse in late November. The Everyman is a large, opera house-style professional theatre, seating 650, with a full-sized orchestra pit, and all the facilities you would expect in a big theatre. We get into the theatre at midnight on Saturday evening, and open on Monday or Tuesday, so the Sunday tends to be a bit hectic - except for the back-stage crew, for whom the word hectic is an understatement! The Playhouse is an amateur theatre, seating about 200, but it is very much a theatre as they used to be, not a village hall! The dressing rooms are cramped and there are no facilities for flying scenery, but it is great fun to perform in, and has recently had a complete make-over; most importantly, perhaps, there is a members' bar. The get-in is a little easier at the Playhouse, as we have the stage to ourselves for the previous week, enabling us to build the scenery in situ, and giving us the opportunity to open on the Saturday before the main week.

Recent past

The current arrangement with theatres has been going since 2000, before which we performed in the Everyman in the autumn and the Playhouse in the spring. The change was brought about by the Everyman, who had to alter the schedule for commercial reasons.

We have also recently put on several large-scale concerts in Cheltenham Town Hall, the area's premier concert venue, such as our 40th anniversary gala concert, conducted by our president at the time, Barry Wordsworth, in March 2002. We have done a live broadcast with Radio 2, put on two concert tours to Germany, and even performed Trial by Jury inside Gloucester Crown Court.

Further back

Over the last 40 years, we have put on productions of all 14 Savoy operas, including a reconstruction of Thespis, the full score of which was never published. We have also put on a number of works written around the same time as the G&S operas: The Emerald Isle, Cox and Box, Orpheus in the Underworld, La Belle Helene, The Rose of Persia, The Zoo, Not in Front of the Waiter, The Gypsy Baron, The Merry Widow, The Count of Luxembourg, and Die Fledermaus. More recently we have produced Salad Days, Sweeney Todd, Candide and a 1992 RSC version of The Beggar's Opera which reflect a change in our show programme, being now approximately half G&S.

You

As you can see, if you have read this far (!), there is a huge amount that goes on to make the Cotswold Savoyards what they are. All production personnel, from stars to dogsbody, are appointed for each production, so you could soon see yourself doing any of the following - and if you don't yet have the experience to do what you would like to do, then there are plenty of opportunities to get it; you do not have to have been a member for 20 years to get a leading part, unlike some amateur societies in other parts of the country. In no particular order:

- stage director
- musical director (conductor)
- choreographer
- production secretary
- stage manager

- assistant stage manager
- lighting (design and/or operator)
- set design, construction and painting
- publicity
- poster design
- programmes
- newsletter
- front of house manager and staff
- acting, singing, dancing, or any combination, both chorus and principals!
- orchestra
- rehearsal pianist
- costumes and wardrobe
- make-up
- properties
- prompt

So enjoy your time with the Cotswold Savoyards. As one of our members once said 'You can check out any time you like, but you can never leave!'